A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Thurſday, February 26. 1708.

THE Clamours a raving Party have for ſome Time filled our Heads with, about the Deficiency of Troops in the *Spaniſh* War, led me in my laſt to take Notice of that Affair; among the reſt, I obſerv'd how eager our *High-Flyers* here fall in with any thing, that they think flies in the Face of the Government, and have bought up even to an Engroſſing all the Papers of one Sort or another, that have but in the leaſt deſcanted upon that Matter, in order to diſperſe them over the Countries, to propagate the Diſcontents of the abuſed People, and encreaſe publick Murmur at the Management of our Affairs.

Her Majeſty, in Return to the Addreſs of the Houſe of Commons, and as is expreſs'd in the Anſwer to the ſaid Addreſs, to give all her Subjects Satisfaction, has given a direct and ſuccinct Anſwer to this Matter, having cauſed every Part of it to be examin'd.

One of our Authors has been ſo civil to the QUEEN, as to tell her Majeſty in Print, that he will not object againſt her Anſwer, till he ſees, what the Parliament will ſay to it: I confeſs, I think her Majeſty can do no leſs than thank him for ſo much good Uſage—Ay, tho' he had moſt barbarouſly paſt his Cenſure before upon the Commons Addreſſing, without waiting for her Majeſty's Anſwer.

This is one of the moſt remarkable Pieces of Behaviour from A Subject to his Sovereign, that I have met with a great while—That when the Parliament addreſs'd her Majeſty about the Deficiency in *Spain*, he fell upon

upon it directly, and paſs'd his Cenſure moſt plentifully, before the QUEEN had given any Return to the Particulars; nay, tho' the Commons only addreſs'd her Majeſty to have an Account laid before them how it came to paſs, and her Majeſty promiſed to have it examin'd, and an Anſwer to be given—Yet he could not give his QUEEN a Day's Time, but fell upon it immediately. Now her Majeſty has cauſed it to be examin'd, and has laid a full Anſwer before the Houſe, in which her Majeſty *aſſures her Subjects that no Care has been wanting, &c.* and that *the Matter has not been fully ſtated to the Houſe*. And now this Gentleman will not paſs his Cenſure, till he hears, what the Houſe of Commons will ſay; very Honourable to the QUEEN this is indeed. *Obſervator*, N°.....

Well, well, ſays one now, is it not juſt to wait, till the Perſons, that ſtated this to the Houſe, have anſwer'd for themſelves? *Yes yes* moſt juſt; but was it not as juſt to have waited, till the QUEEN had examin'd the Matter, and till the Perſons concern'd on that Side had anſwer'd for themſelves too? — But the Caſe is plain, the Gentleman is afraid, if a wrong or a haſty Cenſure had been paſs'd on the Houſe of Commons Addreſs, the Houſe would reſent it; but the Lenity of her Majeſty is known, and preſuming on that, he durſt inſult Her at Pleaſure.

Well, to let that paſs, let us come to the Fact as ſtated in her Majeſty's Anſwer to the Houſe; and tho' I ſhall not enter into the Enquiry here between the Officers employ'd, and from whom her Majeſty has this Account, and the Perſons who ſtated the Affair to the Houſe, for that is none of my Buſineſs; I muſt enter a few Remarks by way of Caution againſt future paſſing our Cenſures in the Affair of this War in *Spain*.

Firſt You cannot but expect, that the Diſtance of that Service, the Variety of Accidents in the Tranſport Service, the different Nations, Agencies, Councils of State and War, and the like, muſt render that Exactneſs, which is requir'd in ſuch Caſes, impracticable; and it is not always that what we expect, can be comply'd with, or Times, Seaſons, Numbers, &c. be obſerv'd, or made up to the Terms preſcrib'd; but Deficiencies in Quantity, and Deficiencies in Time muſt happen, in ſpight of the moſt exact Management in the World.

I'll enter into one Example to illuſtrate this, which is not only appoſite to — but is really a Part of the Caſe in hand, and which, if we would give our ſelves Time and Patience to conſider, would aſſiſt us in a calm Examination of ſuch Affairs.

And this is the Expedition under the Command of the Earl *Rivers*, which as is now apparent by her Majeſty's Anſwer, was deſign'd for the *Spaniſh* War, and the Regiments ſhipp'd on Board at that Time are reckon'd as Part of the *Spaniſh* Eſtabliſhment. Two Things happened to this Expedition.

Firſt, They were ſhip'd in *July*, 1706, and by the unavoidable and not to be foreſeen Accidents of *firſt* almoſt 4 Months Voyage by contrary Winds and bad Weather; and *ſecondly* the Death of the King of *Portugal*, *on which Occaſion they did ſignal Services at* Lisbon, *too long to inſert here*, they could not arrive in *Valencia* till *January* 170$\frac{6}{7}$; had a thouſand Sieges and Battles happened in this Time, you could not have prevented this———

Secondly, This was not all; but now let us come to the Numbers; we have her Majeſty's Word, that at the Time, *when theſe Regiments ſailed from* Torbay, *they were by Draughts compleated to the Number of* 8297 *Men*, and yet *ſoon after* their Arrival they were reduced to about 4500 Men.

This I bring not at all to examine the Deficiency, for that I am not now upon, but to prove what I advanc'd above, of the Contingency of this remote and difficult War, and to prepare us to meet with Diſappointments in it with leſs Impatience.

From hence let us look back to the Expedition under Sir *John Leake*, for the Relief of *Barcelona*; and there you have a Complication of happy Junctures by the ſpecial Favour of Divine Providence for the Succour of that Place, and of which I have formerly ſpoken, that the Hand of Heaven might be taken Notice of by us, both to the Praiſe of his Goodneſs, and our Encouragement.

One

One Squadron from *Portſmouth*, One ſmall one from *Plymouth*, One from *Ireland*, and One from *Lisbon*, having all of them Troops or other Aſſiſtance, ſailed to relieve *Barcelona*; and how came they there? By an unexpected and admirable Conduct of Heaven, they all met at *Gibraltar* and *Alicant* to a Tittle ſo exactly, and to ſuch a Criſis of Time, that they came to *Barcelona*, when a few Days more had determin'd its Fate, and given up King *Charles* and his Claim to the *Spaniſh* Monarchy to the Hands of the *French* Invader—Well this happened indeed for the Confederacy— But did any Human Power appoint it, had they an Act of Parliament to ſecure their Arrival? Was it likely four Parties, from four ſeveral Quarters ſo remote, and each to be brought with different Winds, ſhould meet ſo to a Day? —And what if they had not met, *Barcelona* had been loſt, and the Miſcarriage might have filled our Murmurs; but could human Skill prevent it, no Agents could have anſwer'd for the Diſappointment.

The Sum of the Caſe therefore lies here; not really what Troops were actually in *Spain* at the Time of the Battle at *Almanza*, but whether all that could be done, or, *as her Majeſty's Words are*, all that could be reaſonably expected to be there *was done*, or *was there*, as to Time and Number; if this be to be anſwer'd, no doubt the Parliament will be ſatisfy'd alſo, for the Houſe of Commons never do expect Impoſſibilities, tho' we do—And we have her Majeſty's Word again—That this has been examin'd for her Majeſty's Satisfaction, and that her Majeſty is ſatisfy'd, no Care has been wanting.

I ſhall examine in my next, how far her Majeſty's Satisfaction ought to be Ours—And how far we have Reaſon to believe, her Majeſty is ſatisfy'd upon good Grounds, that our next Inſult may not be upon her Royal Diſcretion, for we are apt to be very free with our Sovereign; of which hereafter.

MISCELLANEA.

THE following Letter having been twice ſent me, and ſome Importunity with it for its Publication, I could not deny the Author of it the Liberty of ſhowing it to the World, tho' perhaps my Obſervations on it may not be ſo full as he expects.

SIR,

I Am inform'd, that the great Cry of Perſecution in North-Britain, *as uſed here to raiſe Money, is a Cheat; the Prieſt of our Pariſh hath been very induſtrious to beg Money on that Account, and hath been with me, but I do not find he hath any Letters-Patents from the QUEEN for ſuch Collections: I think, it is agreed on all Hands, that the Perſons pretending to be perſecuted are ſuch as diſown the QUEEN and Government, and if ſo, it may be ſuppoſed, would deſtrone her, were it in their Power. Now, ſuppoſe the Money collected, under Pretence for their Relief, ſhould be apply'd to buy Arms, and to raiſe an Inſurrection in order to dethrone the QUEEN and ſubvert the Government; whether thoſe, who pay, and thoſe, who collect ſuch Contributions, may not by our Laws be adjudg'd Guilty of High Treaſon for the ſame?*

Your ſpeedy Anſwer hereunto may be of Uſe to the Publick. The great Preparations of the French *by Sea to theſe Parts look, as if they had ſome great Deſign in hand; I wiſh, theſe Contributions may not be made ſubſervient thereunto; our Prieſt hath already collected, as he ſaith, Forty Pounds in our little Pariſh, but I do ſuſpend giving him any thing on that Account, until I have your Anſwer to my Query; in the mean Time I reſt yours.*

February 18.
1707.

I have given my Opinion about Charity to the *Scots* Clergy, who were depoſed at the Revolution, in a late *Review*; if any Man does yet preſume to ask your Charity for the *Epiſcopal* Clergy under preſent Perſecution from the Kirk there; as I ſaid then, I ſay it again, it is a Chear ———

But I muſt ſay, in Anſwer to this Letter, that two Things may be very reaſonable for every Man to ask of the Collectors of this Charity.

1. Sir, what Authority have you for this Collection?
2. How ſhall I be aſſur'd, that the Money ſhall be rightly apply'd

Indeed it may be ask'd in general, why did not theſe Gentlemen think fit to ſue for Charity in a legal Way, I mean by Brief or Letters-Patent, allowing them to collect it; nor indeed does the Neglect of this leave them without Suſpicion, that this Money may be miſapply'd?

They cannot pretend, her Majeſty would refuſe them a Brief, but it may be ſaid, if they had it, they would be oblig'd to let the World know, who had the Money; in which Enquiry I will not ſay, that ſome will have it, who may employ it to cut the Throats of the Givers, and to carry on Plots againſt the Government: But this I dare ſay, ſome muſt be apply'd to Hands, who as perſecuted People have no Claim at all to it.

Now, as they could not but know, that the Want of a Brief would lay them open to ſuch a Suſpicion, why to avoid the Occaſion, could they not have obtain'd Letters Patent for a Brief, if they had not been afraid of letting the Nation ſee, how the Money was diſpos'd?

I ſhall conclude this Remark with a ſhort Advice to the Gentlemen of the *Engliſh* Clergy, who, generally ſpeaking, are the Collectors of this Charity. Pray, Gentlemen, prepare your ſelves to be able to give a very good Account, who this Money is paid to, and how apply'd; for I can aſſure you, Minutes of your Collections will be laid before the Parliament, in order to enquire what has been done with the Money—And if it ſhould appear, that being collected for perſecuted Miniſters, it was paid to ſuch as were not perſecuted, I will not ſuggeſt worſe, I need not tell you the Conſequences—Had you collected it by Brief, you had acted ſecurely, and the Perſons nam'd in the ſaid Briefs could have given you ſufficient Diſcharges; but it is hard to ſay whoſe Receipt can be a legal Diſcharge to you now; and if you pay the Money to any Uſe, but ſuch as was declar'd to be the End of the Giver, I think, it may not be a Hint unworthy your Conſideration, whether not only the Government, I mean the Parliament, may examine it, but every private Man has his Action againſt you for the Mony.

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+++ *She lives at the Golden-Ball in Hand Court, over againſt great Turnſtile in Holborn.*